



State of California
Respiratory Care Board
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Inquiry: Is it in the scope of practice for a licensed RCP who is also NRP certified to assign and legally chart a neonatal APGAR score?

Response: It is the opinion of the Board that the ability of a licensed respiratory practitioner to assess and document the parameters associated with APGAR scoring is within the scope of their practice. The data elements of activity (muscle tone), pulse, grimace (reflex irritability) appearance (skin color) and respirations are all physiological data elements and are clearly defined in both the respiratory care practice act as well as the AARC scope of practice document.

It denotes the scope of the Respiratory Therapist as:

The practice of respiratory care encompasses activities in: diagnostic evaluation, therapy, and education of the patient, family and public. These activities are supported by education, research and administration. Diagnostic activities include, but are not limited to: (1) obtaining and analyzing physiological specimens; (2) interpreting physiological data; (3) performing tests and studies of the cardiopulmonary system; (4) performing neurophysiological studies; and (5) performing sleep disorder studies.

Reference # 2004-C-01